SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND

By EDRIC G. ROBERTS

ILLUSTRATED BY

LIONEL EDWARDS

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35061 P.

The blowing of the North, the first wild hollow, when the notes hung through the autumn woods and roll up the smooth flat mountain sides; and Brandon answers Countisbury. & Countisbury sends it on to Lynmouth Falls, till it sweeps out of the gorge and dies away upon the Severn Sea.

Ring a Ring.

Visions of all we must miss, rise before us
Pictures of hunts men, horses & hounds
Echoing notes & in four-way chorus
Flaunt us in dreams, the sweetest of sounds

THE Author's thanks are due to the Editors of *Country Life* and *The Tatler* for their kindness in giving him permission to republish poems which have appeared in those papers.

SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

Illustrated by LIONEL EDWARDS.

GALLOPING SHOES.
By WILL H. OGILVIE.

SCATTERED SCARLET.
By WILL H. OGILVIE.

OVER THE GRASS.
By WILL H. OGILVIE.

A HANDFUL OF LEATHER.
By WILL H. OGILVIE.

SPORTING SONGS AND VERSES.
By G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE.

HUNTING SONGS.
By R. E. EGERTON WARBURTON.

HUNTING THE FOX.
By LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.

SPORTING VERSE.
By ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.

CUB-HUNTING STARTS.

Frontispiece.

SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND

AND

OTHER HUNTING VERSES

By CAPTAIN EDRIC G. ROBERTS

WITH

EIGHT PLATES IN COLOUR

By LIONEL EDWARDS

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TO STELLA

Three white socks, and a star for a blaze,
Fifteen-one, and the brightest of bays,
Heart of gold, and the courage that stays,
These few verses are penned in your praise.

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SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND

SOMEWHERE in England are horses out grazing,
Nibbling the grass by the side of a stream,
Pausing, perhaps, to stand tranquilly gazing
Over the fields, in a midsummer's dream.

Do their thoughts turn to some days of last season,
When these same fields they went sailing across ?
Do they remember that bank with the trees on,
Where some one took an imperial toss ?

Do they look back with delight or displeasure
To those stern efforts to live with the pack ?
Would they prefer these enforced days of leisure
To the ride out and the long homeward hack ?

They who have galloped the country so gamely,
Squandered their strength through the mud and the
mire,
Can't be contented to settle down tamely
Here, with the sheep, and to all they aspire.

See how they cock their ears forward so keenly,
When, in the distance, a motor-horn sounds ;
See them trot up to a gateway serenely,
Eagerly looking for huntsman and hounds.

Well do they know that this respite from labours
Is in the way of a much-needed rest ;
Just a few weeks with the flocks as their neighbours,
Then, the brave battle to live with the best.

Idly they wander the broad pastures over,
Swishing long tails at the heat and the flies,
Brushing knee-deep through the vetch and the clover—
Kings of the grass-lands they hold as their prize.

TRAGEDY

WHEN she came to us first, she was little and round,
And appeared to be like any other small hound ;
She was certainly pretty, with eyes that implored,
But the rest of her seemed to be thoroughly bored,
And she sat in the kitchen, and yawned in one's face,
As if saying, ' I *don't* think a lot of this place.'

For a month she behaved like a model of Youth,
Being seen and not heard, always telling the truth,
And obediently doing the things she was told ;
Only once, in that time, was it needful to scold,
Then, the look in those soulful and sorrowing eyes
Made us promptly relent, and our methods revise.

But we soon were to long for those good days of peace,
When reports from the kitchen began to increase,
And the utmost of tact was required several times,
To relieve the high tension inspired by her crimes ;
Till, at length, we were bound to admit that our saint
Needed greater control and a fuller restraint.

So, a court of inquiry was duly convened,
All the evidence proving the saint such a fiend
That the only real way of our keeping the peace,
And ensuring that Tragedy's antics should cease,
Was to banish her quickly, ere worse things occurred ;
To the stables, forthwith, she was promptly transferred.

For a fortnight, or more, she was all that was good,
Making friends right and left, in the way that she could,
With those wonderful eyes which she knew how to use,
And that effortless charm to delight and amuse ;
But we 'd warned them, before, of the depths of her guile,
To receive, in return, just a tolerant smile.

But, not long after this, there was uproar and strife,
When poor Tragedy barely escaped with her life ;
She had chewed up the bandages, bullied the cat,
Even bitten the strapper, and eaten his hat,
But the worst of her crimes, which they all voted 'steep,'
Was her new entertainment of chasing the sheep.

We decided to try some old kennels, which stood
At the end of the garden, a storage for wood,
So we had them cleaned out and her fiend-ship installed,
Where she sulked for ten days, and, when any one called,
She would treat them to one of her soul-stirring looks,
Then curl up, with a sigh, in the darkest of nooks.

We were just on the point of relenting again,
When her devil began a new sort of campaign,
Which consisted of turning her woes into song,
And her vocal chords throbbed all the day and night long,
Till it drove us insane. Something had to be done,
Though 'twas gall to admit that her devil had won !

But, by this time, she 'd grown rather big, and it seemed
To be asking for trouble, and just what she 'd schemed,
To allow her indoors, to the kitchen, once more,
Things would obviously be so much worse than before ;
But she had to go somewhere, and we 'd tried all the rest,
So we brought her inside, and just hoped for the best.

From the first she appeared to leave evil behind,
And to virtue was suddenly wholly resigned ;
She would play with the children for hours at a time,
Or go driving with Master, in rapture sublime ;
But the thing she liked best was to follow a horse,
And she always came out, as a matter of course.

We were sceptical, rather, how long it would last,
With the memory, green, of her terrible past,
But, in spite of her record, and history, too,
To let bygones be bygones was all we could do.
She was soon such a pet with the household, complete,
That we had to give in, and acknowledge defeat.

The remarkable thing of the whole strange affair,
And of which she appeared to be quite unaware,
Was the fact that she showed not the least little bent
To return to her habits of wicked intent.
Why she settled down peaceably nobody knew,
But she did, and more sanely, the older she grew.

When it came to the time that she had to depart
To the Kennels, it seemed that she *must* break her heart;
It was really pathetic the way she implored
To be left with the people she loved and adored,
And it went to our hearts to bid tender good-byes
To our dear little saint with the wonderful eyes.

At the Puppy-show, later, our breasts swelled with pride,
For it didn't take long for the Judge to decide
To which puppy the first prize for bitches should go,
And the Challenge Cup, too, for Best Hound in the show ;
We had won it with Tempest, her mother, before,
So that Tragedy's triumph was all things, and more !

CUB-HUNTING STARTS

THE trees and the hedges both touched with a glory,
The bracken all turning to gold,
And grass in the mornings bejewelled and hoary,
Are sights that are good to behold.

September is with us, and soon we 'll be hearing,
As mists roll away from the dawn,
A note that is bandied from covert to clearing,
The magical note of the horn.

And woods that have slumbered in peace and in quiet
The whole of the long summer through,
Will suddenly waken to clamour and riot,
Now cubbing is starting anew.

OCTOBER

AUTUMN leaves are fluttering down,
Bronze and gold they carpet the grass ;
Sunbeams slant through russet and brown,
Gaily dappling hounds as they pass.

'Twixt the withered bracken and ferns,
Down the ride come pattering feet,
Wistful eyes and swaggering sterns—
Hounds are moving off from the meet.

Black and tan and yellow and pied,
On they go from sunlight to shade,
Trotting by with arrogant stride,
Through the woodland's golden brocade.

EXILES

EXILES abroad, as November draws nearer,
Think, with dismay, of all that it means ;
Horses and countries, by distance, grown dearer ;
Favourite meets and gay hunting scenes.

Visions of all we must miss rise before us,
Pictures of huntsman, horses and hounds ;
Echoing notes and a far-away chorus
Haunt us in dreams, the sweetest of sounds.

Who of all those at home hunting this season
Will, for a moment, wish we were there ?
Not very many, we fear, within reason—
Only, perhaps, a little bay mare !

THE OPENING DAY

IN THE HUNT STABLES

THERE 's a bustle and stir in the stables this morning,
An additional zest to the work being done,
With old Jorrocks the weather-vane gaily adorning,
And the flashing of harness and steel in the sun.

All is keenest excitement and cheery commotion,
With a stamping of hoofs and a rattle of pails,
Where the grooms are outvying each other's devotion
In the care of their charges, from muzzles to tails.

Like a squadron preparing for General's Inspection,
Not a buckle is missed, nor a hair out of place,
And each horse is a picture of stable perfection
By the time he is ready to start for the chase.

All the days, up to now, spent in cubbing have acted
As rehearsal parades for the sterner events,
And to-day's ceremonial has always exacted
An attention to detail which no one resents.

The success of a hunt is the pride in its stable,
For by this a pack's sound reputation is made,
And a slip-shod establishment never was able
To compete with the old ' spit-and-polish ' brigade.

THE OUTLIER

We had tried the whole morning with no luck at all,
Had drawn the best coverts in vain,
And the chances of finding seemed terribly small,
A blank day in prospect too plain.
It was odd, for conditions were obviously good,
We all were quite ready to vow
If we only could *find*, hounds would run for their blood,
And go, as they only knew how.

It was well after three when old William of Rew
Rode up to the Master, and said,
'Sir, they say there 's a fox, an old outlier, too,
Come up from the big withy-bed,
And he 's lying up yonder, beneath the stone wall,
Asleep and stretched out in the sun.
He 's the one that 's been doing the damage, and all,
From here on to Great Bicking*ton*.'

At this excellent news we were suitably cheered,
It seemed far too good to be true,
And we promptly forgot all the things we had feared,
In blessing old William of Rew.
Without losing a second, the Master, with hounds,
Was off to the top of the hill,
While young Henry, the whip, galloped down to the bounds
Of Rew, where he waited, stock-still.

In a whirl of excitement we followed the pack,
Each striving to get a good place,
For, if hounds went away to a sure holloa-back,
Not many could live with the pace.
And, in less than the time that it takes to relate,
The fox was on foot and away,
With the pack on his brush, he was nearly too late,
But slipped them, I 'm thankful to say.

With a cry that was utterly glorious to hear,
The pack streamed along in his wake,
And we galloped like blazes, to try and get clear,
Deciding the line we should take
Which would get us on terms, at the outset of things,
Before the field made up its mind ;
For the right sort of judgment its own reward brings,
And leaves the half-hearted behind.

Now, to cut a long story, regretfully, short,
Suffice it to happily say
That that outlier showed us some wonderful sport,
And gave us a topping good day ;
For he ran like a good really straight-necked fox should,
With never so much as a twist,
And the line that he chose was the stiffest he could,
As witness the casualty-list.

And the point that he made was ten miles of the best,
From Rew to the Bickington rocks,
With the big open earths as his ultimate quest,
The harbour of many a fox.
There we left him in peace, which he richly deserved,
Although, for the hounds, it seemed hard,
For they 'd stuck to him gamely, had never once swerved
As much as an eighth of a yard.

But we most of us felt that a fox of his breed
Should merit the safety he 'd won,
And, no doubt, later on, he would show us his speed
Again, ere the season was done.
I 'm afraid, all the same, a few farmers were mad
To dig him out, quick, there and then,
As they gave him a character specially bad,
And doubted we 'd find him again.

But the Master was firm, and we trotted away,
To draw the gorse coverts below,
Where, our virtue, the Gods of the Chase to repay,
Provided a fox that was slow ;
As, before he had gone a few fields, more or less,
The pack bowled him over in style,
And, thus, claimed their reward and the fruits of success,
Which made all their efforts worth while.

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

OR, THE YOUNG ENTRY

THE children are home for the holidays now,
A gay little crowd and a sporting one too,
They go where the grown-ups go, careless of how
Their ponies get over, so long as they do.

Arrived at the meet they are wild to begin,
And can't understand all the waste of good time
Spent drinking brown sherry or horrid sloe-gin,
And deem it a most unforgivable crime.

However, as soon as the first move is made,
All frowns disappear and excitement prevails,
And each is quite certain his place on parade
Is just in the rear of the hunt-horses' tails.

And, during the time the first covert is drawn,
As quiet as mice in their saddles they sit,
To catch the first whimper or note on the horn
Proclaiming that Reynard 's decided to quit.

Then, little legs thumping their fat ponies' sides,
Away they go merrily over the grass,
Though no one out hunting more jealously rides,
For each is determined his friends to out-class.

When finally hounds have run into their fox,
The Master will wait till the last child is up,
In order that those who are just out of socks
May come and be blooded—like every good pup.

The others their voices to 'Who-oop' ing add,
And hope against hope, without daring to ask,
It may be their luck to be given a pad,
Or heaven itself, if the brush or the mask !

Then grooms come along and respectfully say
It 's time to go home as the cars are in sight ;
So, thoroughly happy and pleased with their day,
The kiddies reluctantly bid us 'good-night.'

And all the way home they may chatter and boast
Of how they jumped this, or were there giving leads,
Yet, nevertheless, in their hearts uppermost
Is love, most sincere, for their brave little steeds.

COLOUR

THE old saying, so often repeated,
That ' there never was yet a good horse
Of a really bad colour,' is greeted
With a shrug, as a matter of course ;
To the past it is now relegated
As the lore of some old-fashioned school,
Which believed in traditions that rated
An exception as proof of the rule.

Now, the standard of goodness is reckoned
By more up-to-date measures than these,
Where the chances of colour come second,
If the rest of the qualities please ;
And as long as he 's proved a performer,
Any horse, even skewbald, will do,
Though, no doubt, his reception is warmer
If his coat 's a less circus-like hue.

I confess I am Early-Victorian,
(For the *good* colours, only, I love),
And agree with the ancient historian
Who composed the old adage above ;

But, although to the lot I 'm devoted,
Whether chestnut or black, brown or grey,
I must own my affections have voted,
For the choicest, a black-pointed bay.

TRAFFIC AND TARMAC

GONE are the days when we hacked out with pleasure,
All of the way to a long-distant meet,
Riding in peace, at our sweet will and leisure,
Lords of the road, with the world at our feet.

Now we must travel like curs of low cunning,
Seeking the side-roads and skirting the towns,
Turnpikes and villages furtively shunning,
Fearful of meeting the motorists' frowns.

Brave is the man who can face the King's highway,
Happily ride on a road made of glass,
Leave without qualms the unpopulous byway,
Sure that his horse all the traffic will pass.

When, by ill-luck, there are no ways of going
Out to the meet save along the vile tar,
Frankly we own to the white feather showing—
Send on our horses, and follow by car.

THE FIND

THERE 's a sky like lead, this December morn,
With a streak of light on the distant hills,
And the huntsman's voice, on the breezes borne,
All the woodland's breadth, with its music, fills,
While the joyful twang of the hunting-horn
Makes the coppice ring with expectant thrills.

And the pack is feathering, all about,
As it draws up-wind, in the undergrowth,
Like a chequered fan, gaily opened out,
Through the thick-set brambles, yet nothing loth,
While the waving sterns never leave a doubt
That a fox is there,—all would stake their oath.

Then a whimper soon on the keen air floats,
And another leaps to confirm it so ;
Now, the chorus crashes from forty throats
As the pack streams forth, in its zest to go,
While the horn is blown in staccato notes
To the whip's loud echoing tally-ho.

THE TEN-ACRE FIELD

THE ten-acre field, where the yearlings run,
For each generation, in turn, has won
A mead of success in the world of sport,
By virtue of all its expanse has taught ;
Here, famous brood-mares, in complacent ease,
Have wandered, and slumbered beneath the trees ;
Here, foals, in their childhood, have romped and played,
And many a hunter 's been schooled and made ;
While over the course, on the farther side,
The Point-to-point hopes have been duly tried ;
And here, too, the Master's whole stud was raised,
The pick of the bunch, that the world has praised.

* * * * * *

But, one little plot, where the shadows dwell,
Is sacred to those who have played the game,
And, here, in the field that they knew so well,
Their memory lives in the carven name.

HUNTED

BLACKENED with sweat, and mud to the eyes,
Bravely intent on breasting the rise,
Where, at the top, his harbourage lies,
  Reynard is running, desperately slow.

Always behind, that sound in his ears,
Savage for blood, he painfully hears,
Urging him on, as ever it nears,
  Up to the ridge,—his refuge below.

If he can make it, all should be well,
Deep in its fastness snugly to dwell ;
Almost he grins, on hearing the yell :
  ' Yonder he goes, huic, huic, tally-ho.'

Somehow, at last, the sky-line is topped ;
Down to the holt he scarcely has dropped,
Ere, with a sob, he finds it is stopped ;
  Sick with despair, he, yet, turns to go.

But he 's too late ; a challenging hound
Leaps to the front, with victory crowned ;
Nought can he do but hold to his ground,
  Fiercely, he stands there, facing his foe.

Soon, all around, the clamouring pack,
Hackles erect on every back,
Musters its strength to launch the attack ;
  This is the end, and well does he know.

Borne to the grass by pressure of weight,
Snarling and snapping, he yields to his fate,
Fighting his last in furious hate,
  Grimly content to give his life so.

THE WHIP

As, still as a statue, he sits on his horse,
Watching and waiting,
Or rounding up stragglers behind in the gorse,
Cursing and rating,
He 's always the same, hard-bitten and game.

The voice of a hound, or the click of a hoof
Tell him what 's doing,
He knows, on the instant, alert and aloof,
All that is brewing ;
Lean-visaged and tanned, he 's always at hand.

When hounds are at fault and are lifted in vain,
Nothing resulting,
His musical holloa is heard through the rain,
Faintly exulting ;
He 's sure to be right, whatever the plight.

And, during a run, when the pack, in full cry,
Goes hell-for-leather,
He sees, all the time, with his critical eye,
Hounds are together ;
No matter the pace, he 's there in his place.

THE WHIP.

But, after it 's over, we leave in our cars,
Cosily weary,
While he collects hounds by the light of the stars,
Placidly cheery ;
Although it 's hard work, there 's nothing he 'd shirk.

And if, every day, he is up with the dawn,
Grooming and feeding,
There 'll come a time, soon, when he 'll carry the horn,
True to his breeding ;
The salt of the earth, he 'll show what he 's worth.

FOX-HUNTER'S INN

It was blowing a gale and was raining like sin,
When we met in the yard of the Fox-hunter's Inn,
But the dozen, or so, of us out didn't care,
For the pick of the country is round about there,
And we knew very well that the Spinney would hold,
So the fewer the better ; a day for the bold.

When the Master arrived, buttoned up to the chin,
As he gave us ' Good-morning ' he smothered a grin,
And he nodded to each of us, keenly aware
That the First Flight was mustered to do and to dare,
That, to-day, the full story would never be told,
Though, enlarged in the telling, 'twould never grow
old.

With the rain in our faces we drew and we found,
To a cry of rare beauty, the merriest sound,
And away we all went, like a cavalry charge,
To the Vale, where the fences are hairy and large ;
And, with only so few, we could go where we chose,
Without caring a rap for the other man's woes.

Oh, the pace was a cracker, the going unsound,
And the fox a bare field from the forrard-most hound,
All the way from the Spinney to Massingham's Marge,
Where the language was all you might hear in a barge,
And the jealousy shown might have made you suppose
We were riding a steeplechase,—elbows and toes !

All the narrow escapes and the tosses we took,
On a course, would have thrilled any making a book,
But we hadn't the time to give more than a thought
To the way of our going, save not to be caught,
For the fox was a good 'un, and showed he could stay,
In the teeth of the wind, every inch of the way.

But we killed him at last, after crossing the brook,
In the open, beyond, by Windhanger Hook ;
And the joy of the chosen no gold could have bought,
As we stiffly dismounted and pledged him in port ;
For the ' will to be with them ' had won us the day :
As for bruises and knocks—let 'em cost what they
may !

A BAD FALL

One gets rather callous, out hunting, no doubt,
And learns to ignore all the minor mishaps,
Just glancing to see whether help is desired,
Or what all the trouble is mainly about ;
One's air of relief rather flagrant, perhaps,
On finding one's aid is not really required.

But, nevertheless, it 's a terrible thing
To witness the fall of a man and his horse,
To see them come down, as if they 'd been shot,
When taking a fence, with a rush and a swing,
And *one* struggles up, to continue the course,
But (Heavens, who is it ?) the *other* does not.

ORDERED ABROAD

ORDERED abroad to some far foreign station,
Leaving behind us horses and friends ;
Dismal, indeed, is the realisation
Hunting at home for years, maybe, ends.

Horses that carried us days without number
Soon must be sold or given away,
Top-boots and toppers be put with the lumber,
Heavy pink coats in lavender stay.

Hunting there 'll be for those who may care to
Follow a drag, or ride after ' jack,'
Travesties, surely, that cannot compare to
Days with the Blank, a galloping pack.

Acres of pasture, the Vale in its beauty,
Cream of the country, none can surpass ;
This we give up in obedience to duty :
Ordered abroad—Good-bye to the grass !

A LAWN MEET

Hounds are meeting at the Castle,
See the people crowding there,
Grooms with horses, full of mettle,
Prancing in the morning air ;
Dealers and their strings of chargers,
Good 'uns, bad 'uns, all are out,
Making money for their stable,
They 've no time to prance about.

Then the hounds, the whips and huntsman
Jogging gaily up the drive,
Pink coats gleaming in the sunshine,
Are the next ones to arrive,
Followed by a bunch of schoolboys
Striving hard to keep the pace,
While, behind, in hob-nailed bootings,
Come the walkers of the Chase.

Motor-cars of all descriptions,
Cyclists and a trap or two,
Horsemen, riding in the gutter,
Curse the traffic and the queue ;

A LAWN MEET.

Charabancs disgorge their patrons,
Not allowed beyond the gate,
And, in turning, block the entrance,
Earning quite a lot of hate.

Pink coats, black coats and rat-catcher,
Habits blue and black and brown,
Landed-gentry and their ladies,
Soldiers from the county-town,
Tradesmen, doctors and one lawyer,
Gather round the festive board,
People seldom seen out hunting
Toast the Castle's noble lord.

Butler, footmen, women-servants
Busy running to and fro,
Handing port and cherry-brandy,
Sherry-wine and curaçao ;
While, beyond, in cheerful conclave,
Group the farmers, grooms and such,
Quaffing mugs of ale and cider,
Laughing, jesting over much.

Though the meet was at eleven,
Not till nearly twelve o'clock
Does the Master give the signal,
Standing by the mounting-block ;

Then is all a merry bustle,
  Hounds are given right of way
Through the throng of eager sportsmen
  Getting up as best they may.

Every one is pleased and happy,
  Looking forward to a run,
Bold as brass, afraid of nothing,
  Ready for the best of fun ;
Once a year the County musters
  For the Castle's lordly meet ;
Well the sporting owner knows it,
  Hence his jumping-powder—neat !

FATE

Five little fox-cubs at home by the river,
Playing and rolling the length of the strand,
Knowing no law but of ' stand and deliver,'
Each with his destiny writ in the sand.

One rather big and inclined to be lazy,
Bully and braggart, the small ones declare ;
Thus, on a morning all misty and hazy,—
' Chopped him in covert,' his epitaph bare.

Cubbing days, too, may account for another,
When the small vixen would die, like a saint,
Giving her life for her favourite brother,
Crossing his line when he 's feeble and faint.

Only in vain, for, perhaps, a month later,
When on the move, ere the world is astir,
He 'll meet his end at the hand of a traitor—
Shot in his tracks, like a vagabond cur.

Boldest of all, the young dog-fox remaining,
Scorning the menace which over him hangs,
Bent on one object, his vengeance attaining :
' Killed in the open,'—with blood on his fangs.

Last of the litter, a vixen surviving,
Bearing a life that is charmed, it would seem,
There, in the Spring, with her family thriving,
In the old earth, by the side of the stream.

WILLINGTON GORSE

If scent 's a bit catchy and not over good,
And coverts aren't holding as well as they should ;
If foxes won't break, and the country 's too blind,
There 's one place that 's always a pretty sure find,
And favourite draw, as a final resource,
A covert that 's famous, called Willington Gorse.

It lies in the midst of an excellent line
Of country, where all the conditions combine
To make it the pick, with its acres of grass,
And fences of every description and class ;
And here, later on, is the Point-to-point course,
The start in the hollow, by Willington Gorse.

Its masses of furze, on the edge of some rocks,
Have never yet failed to provide a good fox ;
The season half over, or hardly begun,—
Whatever the weather,—you 're sure of a run ;
And every one sends for his best second-horse
On hearing the move is to Willington Gorse.

RIDING TO THE MEET

Riding to the meet, with hounds,
When the morning 's bright,—
All the various sights and sounds
Fill us with delight.

Shafts of sunlight through the trees ;
Sheen of scarlet coats ;
Somewhere distant, on the breeze,
Blackbirds' golden notes.

Hoof-strokes beating out of tune ;
Clinking snaffle-bars ;
Leaves beneath the hedges strewn ;
Celandines like stars.

Hounds a mottled eager throng,
Jostling as they go ;
Pools reflecting all along ;
Faint cock-pheasant's crow.

Rating voice of second-whip,
'Game-boy, have a care.'
Peewits, as they wheel and dip,
Calling everywhere.

Cheery greetings all the way ;
Children at the gates ;
Promise of a scenting day ;
Hope that elevates.

Hounds and horses, huntsman, whips,
Bravest cavalcade ;
Winter, with its beauty, grips,
Holds us captives made.

HEREDITY

He was taken to meets long before he could talk,
Sitting up in his pannier, a bright little chap ;
He was put on a saddle before he could walk,
Dressed in tiny jodhpores and a black velvet cap ;
Later on, he was given a Shetland, called ' Fay,'
Who had never been known to go out of a trot,
But she taught him the secret of balance, one day,
An important event, which he never forgot.
They promoted him, soon, to a different steed,
An old pony, who 'd been his big brother's before,
And he often went out, on the end of a lead,
To indulge in a slow sort of canter,—no more.
But his pride was supreme, and his joy knew no bounds,
When they gave him a pony, quite thirteen hands high,
And allowed him to go to a meet of the hounds,
Under Thomas the coachman's old fatherly eye.
Then, a few seasons later, they raised him again,
To an ex-polo pony, as clever as fun,
So he, now, took his place with the big grown-up men,
And survived, with the boldest, in many a run.

He had learnt how to fall by the tosses he took,
Which were never more serious than sundry hard knocks,
While the country he knew, every yard, like a book,
And exactly the line to expect from a fox.
So it wasn't surprising, when War 'd broken out,
To discover he 'd chosen his Country to serve
In a cavalry troop, as a ready-made scout,
With his eye for a country and resolute nerve.

* * * * * *

Now, he limps when he walks, and he 's gone rather grey,
But, out hunting, he goes just as well as of yore ;
And he brings up his sons in the very same way
As his father and grandfather did so, before.

SEABIRD

He 's not very young and he 's not very sound,
He 's not very fast, now, they say,
But nobody knows every inch of the ground
Like Seabird, the dealer's old grey.

He 's hunted more years than I care to recall,
He 's carried us all in his day,
But no one has ever experienced a fall
On Seabird, the dealer's old grey.

He knows the whole thing from beginning to end,
He 's artful and likes his own way,
But no one would hesitate mounting a friend
On Seabird, the dealer's old grey.

His good reputation has spread far and wide,
His name is a byword, to-day,
And every one takes quite a personal pride
In Seabird, the dealer's old grey.

He 's never been known to be sorry or sick,
He 's out from September to May ;
So, here 's wishing good-luck—to the very last kick—
To Seabird, the dealer's old grey.

SEABIRD.

SCENT

When for days at a time it 's done nothing but rain,
And the country is mud to the hocks,
While what looks like a river is really a drain,
And the river a series of lochs ;
When it seems rather futile, or even insane,
To go hunting, and every one mocks,
And you feel half-inclined to turn homeward again
As the wet trickles down in your socks.

When it 's certain that scent must be all washed away,
And there can't be a fox above ground,
And the going so deep that it 's hopeless to stay,
Or to look for a yard that is sound ;
With the river in flood, all the pessimists say,
' Why, it 's odds on the hounds being drowned,'—
Well, you 'll probably have the most wonderful day,
Run like smoke from the moment you 've found.

When the wind, for a week, has been blowing a gale,
From the North, too, in iciest blasts,
And the highways are strewn with torn branches wholesale,
And the trees, themselves, naked as masts ;
When it 's obvious, too, scent must utterly fail,—
Well, perhaps, in a couple of casts,
You 'll see hounds go away o'er the best of the Vale,
In the Hunt of the Year, while it lasts.

Then, again, in midwinter, you 'll meet in the sun,
And unbutton your coat in the heat ;
All the knowing ones say, ' Not a yard will hounds run,
See them roll on the grass at the meet.'
Yet, before you 're aware that the thing has begun,
Hounds are off on a scent they can eat,
And it 's only by luck you get in for the fun,
While the prophets admit their defeat.

On the other hand, too, when the weather is clear,
Not too bright, but just suitably so,
With the wind in the South and not likely to veer,
And the clouds not too high nor too low ;
When the wise ones declare, full of bustle and cheer,
It 's a day ' for the bitches to go,'—
Well, you simply draw blank. It 's exceedingly queer,
But, of scent, what does any one know ?

DOLCE FAR NIENTE

Mr. Jorrocks, counting twenty,
Ought to be a patron saint,
For, it seems, there still are plenty,
Hunting folk, who lack restraint.

If they 'd only deign to follow
His example, more or less,
Pausing ere they wildly holloa
In exuberant excess.

Many times, in every season,
Is a run quite spoilt by this,
More, than any other reason,
May a mile, thus, mean a miss.

Just when everything is shaping
For a really topping day,
Some poor fool, his betters aping,
Madly screeches, ' Gone away.'

Others, soon, their shouts are blending,
In the sudden senseless din,
Sacred laws of sport offending,—
This, the eighth, most deadly sin.

Masters, mostly, are kind-hearted,
But it on their temper tells
When, before the fun has started,
Half the field gets up and yells.

Mr. Jorrocks, counting twenty,
Surely should be canonized,—
Motto, ' Dolce far niente,'—
Haloed and immortalized.

THE OLD STAGER

A MAN of no age, with moustache nicely curled,
He 's hunted for years and all over the world,
Though modest in speech and demeanour as well,
One feels, none the less, there 's a lot he could tell
Of horses and hounds long before one was born,
And countries wherever they carry the horn.

Although his turn-out is as smart as new paint,
There 's something about it which strikes one as quaint,
And whether the skirt of his coat is too long,
Or whether the brim of his hat is all wrong,
One really is never quite able to state,
Except to agree that it 's not up to date.

But clothes, after all, hardly matter a bit,
It 's mostly a question of courage and grit ;
His horses are good 'uns, no doubt, it is true,
(He 's also reputed to ' go ' on a screw),
But, nevertheless, there are few who can show,
As well as he can, the correct way to go.

And when hounds are running and scent is breast-high,
He takes his own line, which is straight as a die ;
Each fence he encounters he greets with a smile,
And no one can touch him for dash or for style.
So, long may he ride at the top of the hunt,
Continue, for seasons, to lead us in front.

LOST.

LOST

I WAS staying with friends in a neighbouring county,
With the object of having a day on their side,
And they lent me a mare, by the name of King's
Bounty,
Which they said had been raced, but was quite a
good ride.

Having sent on the horses, we drove over later,
To a meet taking place a few miles to the South,
So, until I came up with the old selling-plater,
I 'd had no chance to look my gift horse in the mouth.

She was nothing to look at, except as a stayer ;
As we trotted to covert, I knew she was hot,
And, the moment we found, I just offered a prayer,
When she bucked once or twice, and was off like a shot.

It was all I could do to successfully hold her,
And I wasn't surprised when we soon came to grief ;
As I lay on the ground, I could dimly behold her
Struggle up and go on, with a sense of relief.

For myself, I was only a little bit shaken,
Though annoyed to admit I 'd let go of the reins ;
If I 'd hoped she had gone, I was sadly mistaken,
For a yokel had caught her, with infinite pains.

With reluctance, I parted with silver to take her ;
More in sorrow than anger, I mounted again,
But I felt it was now in my power to make her
A more sensible beast than she 'd been, up till then.

There was nothing to flurry or really alarm her,
All the field and the pack had, long since, disappeared ;
So I settled down sternly, determined to calm her,
Though it meant being stranded, I very much feared.

At the end of a hot twenty minutes, or longer,
She was steady enough to be given her head ;
As, by this, I was feeling substantially stronger,
I essayed the direction the yokel had said.

After trotting, for miles, down a lane with no ending,
I decided to stop, there, and listen for sounds,
As it seemed rather useless our energy spending,
If, perhaps, we were going the wrong way of hounds.

All was silent and still, as a midwinter's morning
Can occasionally be, when there isn't a breeze,
With not even an echo to give me a warning
As to which way to go, after leaving the trees.

I, at length, ambled on, feeling hopeless and lonely,
Till I met with a farmer, who told me the pack
Was still running like smoke, and he thought they were only
Just ahead, as he 'd seen them, a few minutes back.

So I thanked him profusely, and hastened to follow
His advice, which I earnestly trusted was sound,
With my ears on the stretch for a far-away holloa,
Or the mystical note of a clamouring hound.

After going some distance, I pulled up King's Bounty,
As I found, having got to the top of a hill,
I could see a good way across half of the county,
And was hoping the field might be visible still.

But there wasn't a sign of a horse or a rider,
Not so much as a speck of a single red coat,
And I knew, with the space getting wider and wider,
That my chance of reunion was very remote.

The despair that I felt was increased, not diminished,
By the fact that the country was utterly strange ;
So, for me, it was true the day's hunting was finished ;
It was hopeless expecting my ill-luck to change.

As a solace, I lighted my pipe, and proceeded
To continue my solitary way down the lane ;
Then, as, really, the final and crowning thing needed
To complete my discomfort, it started to rain !

In the drizzle which, now, like a blanket, descended,
The few landmarks I 'd noted were soon blotted out,—
The last links with the world, on which I 'd depended,—
I was lost, then, beyond any shadow of doubt.

For a very long time I passed no habitation ;
Like a couple of ghosts, old King's Bounty and I
Trotted dismally on, in our peregrination
Of a country which offered no hope to the eye.

But, at last, an old inn by the roadside I sighted,
With a sigh of thanksgiving I pulled up the mare,
While, to say I was anything short of delighted,
Is to mildly express my relief from despair.

There, they told me I wasn't so far from a turning
Which would get me, in time, to the house of my friends ;
So, with tankards all round, we succeeded in burning,
For a few happy moments, the candle both ends !

It was dark when, at length, feeling sodden and weary,
I arrived at the house which I 'd searched for all day,
Where the lights and the laughter seemed specially cheery
To the stranger who 'd gone so completely astray.

But they all sympathized, and, I must say, with reason,
For it wasn't much fun, though they used lots of tact,
To be told I had missed it,—' the run of the season,
Quite the best day for years, as a matter of fact.'

VIRTUE REWARDED

THERE was ice on the pools when we started,
There was rime on the trees and the grass,
And we own that we felt chicken-hearted
When we found all the roads were like glass ;
But we tried it, and trusted to heaven
That we wouldn't slip up on the way,
In the hope it might thaw by eleven,
When, with luck, we should have a good day.

But it didn't take long to decide us
That this Agag-like method was wrong,
So, regardless of who might deride us,
We dismounted, and foot-slogged along ;
It is always a painful proceeding
To go walking in top-boots and spurs,
But it 's torture on ice, and when leading
A fresh hunter with frisky ideas.

After miles of this agonized going,
We arrived at the meet, in a sweat,
Where we found it was partially snowing,
And that hounds hadn't rendezvous-ed yet ;

A few grooms, with their horses, were waiting
In the lee of some bushes and trees,
And they cheered us, a little, by stating
If it snowed, it no longer could freeze.

They were right in their prognostication,
For the snow was soon turning to sleet ;
It was raining, in slow moderation,
When the huntsman brought hounds to the meet ;
And, by then, there was quite a collection
Of the people who 'd started out late,
And who 'd missed, by their wise circumspection,
All the roads in their slippery state.

It was joy, once again, to be mounted,
A relief for heels blistered and sore,
But the virtue of keenness discounted
All we 'd suffered by walking, and more,
For we found in the very first cover,
Went away on a screaming hot scent,
To a tune which a true music-lover
Would enjoy to the fullest extent.

And we killed in the open, at Merton,
After going like smoke all the way,
But with not many up, it is certain,
At the finish, and able to say

That they 'd walked seven miles before hunting,
In their boots on a slippery road,—
No intention, of course, of affronting
The discernment the motorists showed !

VAGABOND

Lying full-length, there, in front of the fire,
Dreaming of times that are over and done,
Vagabond, champion and prize-winning sire,
Passes his days in the peace he has won.

Memories crowd in his slumbering brain,
Taking him back to the height of his fame,
Triumphs and victories vividly plain,
All of the glories that made him his name.

Often he 'll stir, with a twitching of joy,
Hearing again that melodious cry :
' Huic to old Vagabond, Vagabond boy,
Huic to the old 'un who can't tell a lie.'

THE STRANGER

Long and lean and lantern-jawed ;
Faded melton, well-scrubbed cord ;
Hat a little on one side ;
Boots his valet's special pride ;
Spurs above the ankle-joint ;
Seat suggesting Point-to-point ;
Four good horses, all clean-bred,
Stabled in Ye Old King's Head :
Thus, without due warning, didst
Come the stranger in our midst.

Rumour had it he was some
Dealer's man from Ballydrum,
Or a coper, one heard tell,
With a string of crocks to sell ;
Till one day upon his coat,
Buttons some one chanced to note,
Though 'twas hard to quite make out
What the ciphers were about.

Always, he was seen to go
Quite as well, or nearly so,
As our boldest riders, too,
Showing, plainly, that he knew
All the game, from A to Z ;
Yet, no thruster, be it said ;
Keen as mustard, out to hunt,
Riding, mostly, up in front.

But a friendly eye he kept
On the youngsters and inept,
Gaining many words of praise
By his courteous little ways ;
Once he missed a splendid day
Catching some one's run-away,
And would often come on late,
Going back to shut a gate.

Then one day his cheerful smile
Seemed less gay, and all the while
He was watching every hound ;
Going madly, once we found,
Reckless of the line he took,
Crashing, blindly, through the brook,
Up with hounds, wet-through, alone,
When they killed by Caesar's Stone.

Riding home, we caught him up,
Asked him if he 'd care to sup ;
' Not to-night, alas,' he said,
Sighing, as he shook his head,
' I 've a train to catch, you know,
Leave is up, and I must go
Back to India, hateful thought ;
But I 've had some glorious sport.'
Adding, as he turned away,
' I 'll come back, I hope, some day.'

HUNTING IN DEVON

ALTHOUGH you may ride the fly-countries for ever,
  Change horses soon after midday,
There 's fun to be had on a cob that is clever
  At banking, down Devonshire way.

The six-days-a-week man, with lots of filled boxes,
  Would, no doubt, be curt in his praise
Of methods deemed slow for the killing of foxes,
  The old-fashioned West-country ways.

There, hounds are allowed to rely on their noses,
  Are never too frequently pressed,
Nor lifted *ad lib.* by a huntsman who poses
  As one of the latest and best.

Perhaps you can't always be up, with hounds running,
  For reasons too patent to state,
But, nevertheless, with a trifle of cunning,
  You 'll get all you want, if you wait.

For hounds may be hunting some distance below you,
While you ride along on the hills ;
However, the wonderful hound-work they show you
Makes up for the absence of thrills.

And Devonshire banks, though they look nice and easy,
When taken, as normally, slow,
Are apt to make even the boldest man ' breezy,'
Unless he 's a horse in the know.

The country is sometimes too awful, admitted,
But leave all the work to your cob.
He 'll get you there, somehow, he 's wise and quick-witted,
Cut out, born and bred for the job.

GHOSTS

WHEN the clocks strike the hour on a moonlit night,
Do old favourites walk in the stable-yard ?
Is it memory's trick or our fancy's flight,
If we see, where the shadows are deeply barred,
A yet deeper shade in the fitful light ?

Are they standing again in their strength and pride,
As so often they 've stood on a hunting morn,
With the irons' bright glint at their saddles' side,
And their ears astretch for a ghostly horn,
Which will beckon them still when the notes have
died ?

THE THAW

The green of the grass-lands is emerald bright,
There are pools in the roadways once more,
The trees gently drip in the February light,
And the building rooks circle and caw ;
It 's happened, at last, in a single short night,
What, for ages, we 've longed for—the thaw.

In durance most vile we have fretted and fumed
While the best of the season went by,
With impotent fury and frenzy consumed
Every day have we studied the sky,
And looked at the horses, too wild to be groomed,
With a jaundiced and sorrowful eye.

But now that is over, the frost is all gone,
We 'll be hunting to-morrow, no doubt,
It 's only a question of, once we are on,
Sitting tight while they bucket about,
For, if we can hold them, it 's *sine qua non*
That we 'll lead the field gaily throughout.

And, after the miserable weeks we have spent
On the exercise-ring of old straw,
Let 's hope for a day with a rollicking scent,
And a fox the first covert we draw ;
But, *if* that 's denied us, we 'll still be content,
Just too thankful for one thing—the thaw !

BANKS

You may come down at timber, or fall at the water,
  Or crash at the lot, to be frank,
But, for sheer overwhelming and murderous slaughter,
  There 's nothing to equal a bank.

And I don't mean the ones that are solid and ' double,'
  As broad as a table on top,
And as clean as can be, not a vestige of trouble,
  From take-off to beautiful drop.

But the ones that are narrow and high and quite rotten,
  With bushes and boughs the whole length,
And a hidden array of old stumps, half-forgotten,
  To stake you with devilish strength.

When you have to go blind, if you want to get over,
  An arm up to safeguard your eyes ;
And a network of holes, which you do not discover,
  Until it 's too late to be wise.

With a scramble and lurch you arrive at the summit,
Half-strangled, but ready to go,
And you 're lucky, if then, you don't drop like a plummet,
Some yards to a duck-pond below.

Or a worse thing may happen, without any warning,
When, just as you 've won to the crest,
Beneath you, you 'll find a colossal ditch yawning,
With trip-wire the height of your chest.

But the worst of the lot is the one that will crumble
The moment you 've landed on top,
Then you know that you 're in for a beast of a tumble,
An end-over-ender—full-stop !

COURAGE

WHEN we leave the main road, and turn in at a gate,
To draw the oak copse at the top of the field,
We can see the whole country mapped out like a state,
Each separate county and canton revealed,
Where the patch-work of pasture and fallow is laid,
A battle arena, of chequered design,
For the chivalrous few who are never afraid,
Whatever the going, to stick to the line.

It 's a sight which invariably thrills and inspires,
And brings out the best, both in horses and men ;
All the legendry deeds of knights-errant and squires
Are, here, in our grass-lands, enacted again ;
For the standard of courage is splendidly high,
And only the bravest can hope for their spurs,
When a fox is away, and the pack, in full cry,
Is going, like blazes, from Denbury Furze.

All the glories of old are epitomized now,
In galloping straight to a gay ' Tally-ho,'
With the country ahead, whether pasture or plough,
To try out our mettle and tempt us to go ;
For there 's nothing on earth that can equal the joy
Of riding to hounds on a horse that we know,
When the glamour of danger, and lust to destroy,
Are dominant still in the spirit we show.

TRAITOR MAGPIE

THE drips on the bracken sparkle and glisten
Where the old dog-fox awakes from his doze ;
With uplifted pad, he pauses to listen,
As on the breeze comes a sound that he knows.

Quite calmly he stretches, lazily yawning,
Sniffs, for a moment, the damp-laden air ;
While, somewhere, a magpie cackles a warning,
Bidding him go, with the utmost of care.

Unruffled he trots to where the copse thickens,
Forcing his way through the bramble and thorn,
And, out at the top, his pace slightly quickens,
Catching a note of the querulous horn.

He drops to the ditch and runs it a quarter,
Doubles again where it touches the drain,
Then, easily jumping over the water,
Steals, like a shadow, away to the lane.

But ere he has gone a furlong from danger,
Over his mask flits a black-and-white shape,
Proclaiming the news to all, friend or stranger :
' Reynard is here, see, he cannot escape ! '

THE HAUNTED WOOD

If ever, by chance, on a Winter's night,
You find yourself passing by Huntsman's Copse,
They say you will hear, if the wind is right,
The eeriest sounds in the bare tree-tops,
A holloa that echoes from end to end,
Which freezes the blood in the listener's veins,
Its lingering notes with the night-winds blend,
Then drop to a whisper, till silence reigns,
A silence of Death, in a world forlorn,
Which broods in the stillness of ghostly things.
Then, loud on the breeze, sounds a silver horn,
A voice, like a bell, in the woodland rings,
And hounds in full cry you can hear go by,
Athirst for the blood of an elfin fox,—
As suddenly gone, in a trembling sigh,
While ever the wind in the branches mocks.

* * * * * *

The story they 'll tell you, with bated breath,
And which they insist that you must believe :—
Will Summers, the huntsman, here, met his death,
Ten seasons ago, on a Christmas Eve.

THE EVENING HUNT

Most of the field had gone home to their tea,
After a nice little gallop or two,
Only a few of us stayed out to see
Whether the Osiers would hold, if we drew.

Doubtful, indeed, seemed the prospect at first,
Never a note or a whimper to cheer ;
Grimly despondent and fearing the worst,
We for leaving, when—suddenly clear,

Over the brow of the hill to our right,
Came a ' view-holloa,' exultant and hoarse,
Eerily wild in the fast-fading light.—
Madly we waited for hounds to endorse.

Seconds went by with our horses hard-held ;
Was it some lunatic's practical joke ?
Jack 's ' Gone-away,' at last, all fears dispelled :
Certainty grew when old Voyager spoke.

Then the full chorus of music crashed out,
Never was heard such a beautiful cry ;
Scent, early on, had been catchy, no doubt,
Now, by the sound, it was more than breast-high.

Gladly we let out our horses at last,
Fully in earnest we sat down to ride,
Took the first fences a trifle too fast,
But, in a moment, got into our stride.

Reynard was setting his mask for the moor,
Over the choicest grass stretch of the Vale,
Yet, could he only of safety be sure,
If he stood up till the daylight should fail.

Down in the West were a few streaks of red,
While in the East rose a big yellow moon ;
Hounds had not checked nor had lifted a head :
Surely they ought to run into him soon.

Steeplechase pace was beginning to tell ;
Thirty such minutes was no common hunt ;
Out of the few who had started so well,
Five of us only were still up in front.

Jumping by moonlight we found rather queer,
Some of the wiser ones took to a lane,
Yet, we kept saying, the end must be near.—
Horses and riders were feeling the strain.

Straight on ahead was the moor's level line,
Reynard's last hope, and the end of all ours ;
Hounds we could see running mute, as a sign,
Full of drive still, they could go on for hours.

Over a fence, all a shadowy gloom,
Under some trees, standing stark to the sky ;
One minute more, we were giving hounds room,
As, with a flourish, they turned and went by.

Reynard had doubled left-handed too late,
In a vain effort to shake off his foes ;
Not for a second did hounds hesitate—
Turned with their fox, without lifting a nose.

Running like ghosts in the pale yellow light,
Fiercely relentless they held to the line ;
Voyager leading the pack, as his right,
Suddenly whimpered, a tremulous whine.

Crossing the turnpike they ran to a view,
Were in, at last, the same field as their fox ;
Caught him and killed him,—too good to be true,—
Only a mile from his refuge, the rocks.

Following hard on the heels of old Jack,
Blindly we jumped through the last cut-and-laid,
Saw him dismount in the midst of the pack,
Pulled up our horses and went to his aid.

There, in the moonlight, we broke up our fox,
Cheering the pack as they worried and fought,
Then, in a manner not quite orthodox,
Borrowed Jack's horn, just to show what we thought !

Fifty-five minutes, and never a check,
Eight miles we ventured to guess as hounds ran,
Three of us left, like the last of a wreck,
Wearily happy and proud to a man.

Jack, then, collected his hounds on the road,
Counted them over, there, licking their scars ;
Blessing the lot for the keenness they showed
Homeward we jogged 'neath the moon and the stars.

HACKING HOME

ALONE with your horse on the empty road,
A pipe in your mouth, and a slackened rein,
That feeling of peace, which lightens the load
Of mile after mile, to the hoofs' refrain.

The knowledge the day has been truly spent,
The sense of achievement, the sportsman's pride,
The lure of the chase and a real content,
The Englishman's love for his countryside.

The thought of the dangers you both have dared,
Delight in the courage your horse has shown,
Such pleasures as these which to-day you 've shared,
Lie deep in your heart, for your very own.

And mile after mile of a weary ride,
Beneath the sky's leisurely changing dome,
Becomes with true comradeship glorified,
As slowly you draw to the lights of home.

TO FINISH THE SEASON

'SADDLEFORD Cross-roads at half-past eleven.'
Only last month, it would seem, we were there,
Rising so early to get there by seven,
Rubbing our hands in the chill morning air.

Time must have flown by, for that was September,
Horses half-fit, and the country quite blind.
Details of every run, since, we remember,
Sorrows and joys of each day call to mind.

Days when we found the first moment in cover,
Others drew blank till the late afternoon ;
Dusting a cub in the dew-spangled clover ;
Killing our fox by the light of the moon.

Crossing the river four times in one morning ;
Over the race-course—a fast little spell ;
Going like smoke, and not heeding a warning,
Taking a toss, and a mud-bath as well.

Gallops that fizzled out all in a hurry ;
Seven-mile points, and a casualty-list ;
Hounds running mute from the find to the worry ;
Chiming like bells in the rain and the mist.

Memories only, alas, for the reason
Everything ends, and the end it is here :
' Half-past eleven, to finish the season,'
Rings like a knell in the fox-hunter's ear.